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DEVELOPMENT AND PROMOTION OF MORE EFFECTIVE ACTION AGAINST ILLICIT DRUG TRAFFICKING THROUGH REGIONAL CO-OPERATION IN DRUG LAW ENFORCEMENT

Report of the Sub-Commission on Illicit Drug Traffic and Related Matters in the Near and Middle East on its twenty-seventh session, held at Vienna from 25 to 26 April 1991

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I. MATTERS CALLING FOR ACTION BY THE COMMISSION ON NARCOTIC DRUGS OR BROUGHT TO ITS ATTENTION

A. Draft resolutions to be recommended by the Commission on Narcotic Drugs for adoption by the Economic and Social Council

1. The Sub-Commission on Illicit Drug Traffic and Related Matters in the Near and Middle East recommends to the Commission on Narcotic Drugs the approval of the following draft resolutions for adoption by the Economic and Social Council:

DRAFT RESOLUTION I

Establishment of regional drug law enforcement countermeasures in the Near and Middle East in the context of socio-economic and cultural development*

The Commission on Narcotic Drugs,

Recommends to the Economic and Social Council the following draft resolution:

"The Economic and Social Council,

"Recalling and reaffirming Commission on Narcotic Drugs resolution 3 (XXXIII) of 17 February 1989,

"Recognizing drug law enforcement training as being central to the fight against illicit drugs,

"Desiring to bring about high-calibre training of drug law enforcement personnel throughout the region,

"Emphasizing the urgent need for a regionally focused, comprehensive training plan, based on the requirements, concerns, priorities and prevailing socio-economic and cultural conditions of the region,

"Expressing its appreciation to the Secretariat for the development of the United Nations drug law enforcement training manual,

"Considering the manual to be milestone in the field of drug law enforcement and a new international instrument of paramount significance that provides States with a model and a set of guidelines that reflect the best practice, methods and techniques to be pursued,

"Considering also that the manual will standardize training at an upgraded level, enhance specialized skills and improve operational performance, achieving overall compatibility and greater cooperative drug law enforcement interaction and counteraction,

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*See paragraphs 56-57 below.

"1. Requests the Secretary-General, to undertake, as a matter of high priority and as soon as possible, the following activities in close cooperation with the Arab Security Studies and Training Centre, the Colombo Plan Bureau, the International Criminal Police Organization and other interested parties, for the benefit of all States in the region, in the context of socio-economic and cultural development:

"(a) To disseminate and to promote the widest possible use of the United Nations drug law enforcement training manual at all levels and to intensify training activities based on its content;

"(b) To assess training needs, priorities and concerns, in consultation with relevant officials and institutions in the region;

"(c) To establish and coordinate a region-wide drug law enforcement training plan and programme and to design and conduct courses to meet the challenge of the ever-changing patterns of illicit traffic in a more effective, cooperative and interactive way;

"(d) To conduct research and impact studies on the use of the manual;

"(e) To continually update and develop supplementary, specialized drug law enforcement training material;

"(f) To establish collaborative subregional training centres for drug law enforcement officials;

"2. Invites the Arab Security Studies and Training Centre, the Colombo Plan Bureau, the Customs Co-operation Council, the International Criminal Police Organization and other parties concerned to work jointly with the Secretariat on the implementation of the present resolution."

DRAFT RESOLUTION II

Convening of a meeting at the ministerial level in the Near and Middle East to enhance the effectiveness of cooperation in resolving matters related to illicit trafficking and drug abuse*

The Commission on Narcotic Drugs

Recommends to the Economic and Social Council the adoption of the following draft resolution:

"The Economic and Social Council,

"Considering the alarming increase in the illicit traffic in narcotic drugs in the Near and Middle East,

"Aware of the supply of illicit narcotic drugs in certain States in the region and the spill-over effects it may have on transit and neighbouring States in the region,

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*See paragraphs 56-57 below.

"Convinced of the importance of concerted efforts by States to cooperate in combating these problems,

"1. Recommends that all States members of the Sub-Commission on Illicit Drug Traffic and Related Matters in the Near and Middle East should ensure that their delegations at its twenty-eighth session and at all subsequent sessions of the Sub-Commission held in the region include the heads of operational law enforcement units with a view to elaborating practical recommendations to resolve matters related to illicit trafficking;

"2. Requests the Secretary-General to convene a meeting at the ministerial level in the Near and Middle East to enhance the effectiveness of interregional cooperation by considering the early implementation of the recommendations arising from the Sub-Commission at its twenty-eighth session, particularly in respect of transit routes, including the Balkan route."

B. Draft resolution for adoption by the Commission on Narcotic Drugs

2. The Sub-Commission on Illicit Drug Traffic and Related Matters in the Near and Middle East recommends to the Commission on Narcotic Drugs the adoption of the following draft resolution:

DRAFT RESOLUTION

Assistance to narcotic-producing States for the eradication of narcotic plants by crop substitution*

The Commission on Narcotic Drugs,

Deeply concerned about the magnitude of illicit poppy cultivation and heroin production,

Considering it necessary to eradicate narcotic plants in order to suppress illicit traffic and to control drug abuse,

Realizing the determination expressed by some States to eradicate narcotic plants and the difficulties caused thereby to illicit drug producers,

Taking into account the provisions of article 14, paragraph 3 (a), of the United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances, 1/ adopted in 1988, and paragraphs 38-50 of the Global Programme of Action. 2/

1. Welcomes the efforts and willingness of narcotic-producing States to take effective measures to eradicate illicit poppy cultivation;

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* See paragraph 58 below.

1/ E/CONF.82/15 and Corr.2.

2/ General Assembly resolution S-17/2, annex.

2. Calls upon the United Nations and other funding bodies to provide financial, technical and other forms of assistance, with the coordination of interested neighbouring States, to the countries with wide-scale illicit poppy cultivation in order to eliminate the opium poppy and, if possible, to substitute other valuable agricultural crops for it.

C. Venue of the twenty-eighth session of the Sub-Commission

3. The Sub-Commission draws to the attention of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs the offer by the Islamic Republic of Iran to act as host to the Sub-Commission at its twenty-eighth session at Teheran in 1991.

II. CONSIDERATION OF URGENT MATTERS OR SPECIFIC ISSUES AFFECTING THE REGION

4. The 2nd and 3rd meetings of the Sub-Commission were devoted to a frank, informal discussion of specific issues facing drug law enforcement agencies in the region. Three issues were chosen for discussion: illicit traffic in fenetylline; illicit traffic in heroin along the Balkan route; and illicit cultivation of the opium poppy in the Near and Middle East. The deliberations on the nature and extent of these problems, the most effective manner of dealing with them, and conclusions and practical recommendations are described below.

A. Issue 1: Illicit traffic in fenetylline

5. The discussion on issue 1, illicit traffic in fenetylline, followed introductory presentations by the secretariat of the International Narcotics Control Board (INCB) and the Applied Scientific Research and Technical Advisory Section of the Division of Narcotic Drugs, United Nations International Drug Control Programme (UNDCP).

6. The abuse of fenetylline was mainly confined to countries in the Near and Middle East. According to the International Criminal Police Organization (ICPO/Interpol), between 1989 and 1990, 31 million tablets were reported seized in Austria, Kuwait, Jordan, Netherlands, Saudi Arabia, Syrian Arab Republic and Turkey. According to the Council of Arab Ministers of the Interior, nearly 45 million tablets had been seized in the region in the period 1985-1989.

7. Strict international controls had been introduced on the licit manufacture and the import and export of fenetylline since 1986. Licit stocks of fenetylline that were ten times in excess of legitimate medical requirements had been maintained in Germany, Spain and Switzerland, the three countries authorized to produce the drug. There was no indication, however, of any diversion or leakage from those stocks.

8. Since 1986, 21 suspicious orders placed with authorized manufacturers or suppliers of fenetylline had been detected and, as a result, 330 million tablets had been prevented from reaching the illicit market.

9. Only one illicit fenetylline laboratory had been reported seized (in Austria in 1988). It had been supplying illicit markets in the Near and Middle East. Unconfirmed reports suggested that other illicit fenetylline laboratories might be operating in Eastern Europe. It was also possible that small-sized pharmaceutical manufacturers were producing fenetylline and supplying the illicit market.

10. Known trafficking routes supplying the region with fenetylline were via the Syrian Arab Republic and Jordan, via Turkey and Iraq to Saudi Arabia, and via Kuwait to Saudi Arabia. In some reported cases it was suspected that the drug had been obtained in Yugoslavia. The methods used in trafficking fenetylline had remained unchanged.

11. Some seized tablets believed to contain fenetylline had proved to be clearly counterfeit preparations containing substances other than the usual ingredients of tablets produced under the brand name Captagon.

12. Based on the above deliberations, the meeting drew the following conclusions:

(a) It was necessary for detailed inquiries to be made following each seizure of fenetylline in order to develop further intelligence on the nature of the illicit traffic in fenetylline;

(b) Information thus obtained should be exchanged between all concerned by the traffic in fenetylline;

(c) Analysing seized fenetylline tablets in forensic laboratories might provide evidence that could be useful in identifying their sources;

(d) Exercising tighter control over the supply and movement of precursors and essential chemical ingredients would restrict the possibility of fenetylline being illicitly manufactured.

13. The following recommendations on issue 1 were adopted:

(a) Law enforcement agencies making seizures of fentylline should make detailed follow-up inquiries, using international cooperation where appropriate, to acquire the maximum information from each case;

(b) Each seizure of tablets suspected of containing fenetylline should be submitted for forensic examination in order to identify the precursors and chemicals used in their manufacture with a view to identifying their source;

(c) Close liaison should be maintained between national drug operational units and their national forensic laboratory services;

(d) National forensic laboratories should maintain close liaison with the laboratory of the Applied Scientific Research and Technical Advisory Section of UNDCP;

(e) All information gained and intelligence developed as a result of the recommendations in paragraphs 13 (a)-(d) above should be more widely and systematically shared between the States, services and organizations concerned;

(f) The laboratory of the Applied Scientific Research and Technical Advisory Section of UNDCP should publish and circulate to all members of the Sub-Commission a comprehensive list of the precursors and chemicals used in the manufacture of fenetylline;

(g) All States members of the Sub-Commission should make every effort to monitor the movement of the precursors and chemicals used in the manufacture of fenetylline in order to identify illicit manufacturers of the drug;

(h) Any new ingredients used in the illicit manufacture of fenetylline should be identified as early as possible;

(i) Informa' on recorded and exchanged on seized fenetylline tablets should include a description of the type of packaging used;

(j) In order to prevent the possibility of fenetylline being diverted from licit stocks, excessive stocks should be reduced.

B. Issue 2: Illicit traffic in heroin along the Balkan route

14. Following an in-depth discussion of issue 2, illicit traffic in heroin along the Balkan route, the meeting drew the following conclusions:

(a) As long as the high level of supply and demand persisted, illicit traffic in heroin along the Balkan route would continue;

(b) If the illicit traffic along the Balkan route were to be successfully interrupted at any point on the route, the illicit traffic would be diverted or the traffickers would turn to new methods. Thus, all members of the Sub-Commission should be aware of the likelihood of new trafficking routes emerging and should watch closely for new developments;

(c) An improved level of communication of intelligence information was essential;

(d) Law enforcement and other authorities combating the drug problem along a clearly defined trafficking route should be made aware of any initiatives being taken by the authorities of other countries with respect to that route;

(e) The use of liaison officers and a greater level of regional coordination, involving all countries concerned, were necessary to combat the illicit traffic in heroin within the region of the Sub-Commission;

(f) It was preferable to strengthen existing organizations and arrangements to combat illicit trafficking along the Balkan route rather than to set up new ones.

15. The following recommendations on issue 2 were adopted:

(a) Efforts to eradicate the sources and supply of heroin should be increased. Initiatives requiring the participation of all members of the Sub-Commission were needed to achieve that;

(b) Members of the Sub-Commission should include in their delegations attending its twenty-eighth session heads of operational law enforcement units with a view to elaborating practical measures to improve operational coordination and the flow of intelligence information on illicit traffic along the Balkan route;

(c) Those involved in initiatives within the European region against illicit traffic along the Balkan route should be asked to include in their activities the participation of source countries and other countries along the route;

(d) Members of the Sub-Commission should play a more active role in European efforts and initiatives focusing on traffic along the Balkan route;

(e) Likely future illicit trafficking developments and activities should be anticipated and the necessary countermeasures should be prepared;

(f) Consideration should be given by all members of the Sub-Commission to the exchange of drug liaison officers; in the meantime, a system of contact persons or points should be established for the drug law enforcement authorities of all members of the Sub-Commission;

(g) Progress in the implementation of the recommendations contained in the present paragraph should be regularly reviewed by the Sub-Commission at each of its sessions;

(h) All members of the Sub-Commission should urgently introduce measures to allow the use of the technique of controlled delivery, particularly against traffickers along the Balkan route;

(i) All members of the Sub-Commission should make use of control methods in respect of road transport consignments, as recommended by the International Road Transport Union. Information in this respect should be circulated to all members.

C. Issue 3: Illicit cultivation of the opium poppy in the Near and Middle East

16. Following an in-depth discussion on issue 3, illicit cultivation of the opium poppy in the Near and Middle East, the meeting agreed on the following conclusions:

(a) While the principal areas of illicit poppy cultivation were well known, the precise extent of the cultivation and opium yield were not;

(b) The high financial return per unit of land was the main driving force for illicit poppy growers;

(c) International treaties and conventions provided for effective action against illicit poppy cultivation and, for that reason, should be urgently implemented;

(d) Bilateral and multilateral initiatives to counter the extent of illicit poppy cultivation had produced positive results;

(e) In some countries and areas, severe law enforcement measures and the destruction of illicit crops had succeeded in reducing or eradicating illicit poppy cultivation; in others, crop substitution and integrated rural development programmes had proved more effective;

(f) Concerted action to eradicate illicit poppy cultivation, which was necessary in all countries of the region, must be accompanied by resolute political determination and the necessary financial resources if it was to be successful.

17. The following recommendations on issue 3 were adopted:

(a) All members of the Sub-Commission should follow the guidelines contained in the Comprehensive Multidisciplinary Outline on Future Activities in Drug Abuse Control, 1/ paragraph 195, and should start and seriously continue to take positive steps to reduce illicit poppy cultivation;

(b) All members of the Sub-Commission should consider entering into bilateral and multilateral arrangements designed to eradicate illicit poppy cultivation;

(c) All technical means available should be utilized where practicable to identify and eradicate illicit poppy cultivation;

(d) The illicit cultivation of the opium poppy in the Near and Middle East should be placed on the agenda of all future sessions of the Sub-Commission so that the progress made might be frequently and regularly reviewed;

(e) Law enforcement capability to combat illicit poppy cultivation should be strengthened, where necessary, by training.

III. PROGRESS REPORT ON STEPS TAKEN TO RATIFY, ACCEDE TO OR PROVISIONALLY APPLY THE UNITED NATIONS CONVENTION AGAINST ILLICIT TRAFFIC IN NARCOTIC DRUGS AND PSYCHOTROPIC SUBSTANCES

18. For its consideration of agenda item 4, the Sub-Commission had before it a document prepared by the Secretariat, entitled "Entry into force and provisional application of the United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances" (DND/27.SC/1991/2/Rev.1).

19. In introducing agenda item 4, the Director of the Division of Narcotic Drugs, United Nations International Drug Control Programme (UNDCP), informed the Sub-Commission that the United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (E/CONF.82/15 and Corr.2) had entered into force on 11 November 1990, following the deposit of the twentieth instrument of ratification by the Government of Spain, pursuant to article 29 of the Convention. As of 25 April 1991, 37 States had become parties to the Convention, including 7 States members of the Sub-Commission. While referring to the complex and novel provisions of the Convention, the Director emphasized the urgency for universal adherence to the Convention in order for it to have its full impact. He informed the Sub-Commission that UNDCP was able to provide States, at their request, with legal and technical assistance that would enable them to adopt the necessary legislative measures and administrative mechanisms necessary to ratify or accede to the Convention and to effectively implement its provisions.

20. The representatives of the Islamic Republic of Iran, Pakistan and Turkey informed the Sub-Commission that their Governments had completed the internal procedures and mechanisms required to adhere to the Convention. They expected their Governments to be in a position to accede to or ratify the Convention before the end of 1991. The representative of Saudi Arabia informed the meeting of the establishment of inter-agency committees to accelerate the ratification of all Conventions.

21. Several speakers informed the Sub-Commission of new legal and administrative measures adopted in their countries to fully implement the provisions of the Convention. The representatives of Egypt and India described specific provisions adopted in their national legislation to implement the Convention. Both States were parties to the Convention.

22. The observer for the Council of Arab Ministers of the Interior informed the Sub-Commission of meetings held between law enforcement agencies from countries affected by illicit cultivation and production and of bilateral agreements to enhance the implementation of specific provisions of the Convention. He stressed the importance of holding regular meetings and conferences in the region to enhance coordination between the agencies responsible for implementing provisions of the Convention. He said that his organization was promoting a regional agreement between States members of the Sub-Commission to enhance the implementation of the Convention.

IV. DRUG LAW ENFORCEMENT TRAINING IN THE REGION OF THE SUB-COMMISSION

23. At its 2nd meeting, on 25 April 1991, the Sub-Commission considered agenda item 5, drug law enforcement training in the region of the Sub-Commission.

24. The Sub-Commission was informed of action taken by the Secretariat in line with Commission on Narcotic Drugs resolution 3 (XXXIII), in which the Commission requested the Secretary-General, in coordination with the Arab Security Studies and Training Centre (ASSTC), the Customs Co-operation Council (CCC), ICPO/Interpol, and other interested intergovernmental organizations, to identify the drug law enforcement training requirements in the region of the Near and Middle East and to make specific proposals thereon to the Commission at its thirty-fourth session. Only three members of the Sub-Commission had responded to the note verbale of the Secretary-General on that subject.

25. The Sub-Commission was informed of action taken by the Secretariat in developing the long-term international drug law enforcement training strategy in conjunction with CCC and ICPO/Interpol. A training strategy for the African region had been adopted at the Fourth Meeting of Heads of National Drug Law Enforcement Agencies, Africa, held at Nairobi from 15 to 19 April 1991. The Sub-Commission was also informed of the adoption of the United Nations drug law enforcement training manual by an advisory group of experts who had met at Vienna from 10 to 14 December 1990.

26. Several speakers commended the Secretariat for the development of the drug law enforcement training strategy and manual, which would fill gaps in drug law enforcement training by establishing common training standards for States in the region of the Sub-Commission. The importance of regional coordination to the streamlining of the training activities in the region was emphasized.

27. Several speakers stressed the importance that their Governments attached to drug law enforcement training. The representatives of Egypt and Pakistan informed the Sub-Commission of the training programmes carried out by drug law enforcement training institutions in their countries.

28. The observers for the Colombo Plan Bureau and the Council of Arab Ministers of the Interior reported on the training initiatives undertaken by their organizations in the region.

29. The representative of Turkey informed the Sub-Commission that his Government was prepared to act as host to a training and research centre that might be established by the United Nations in the region.

V. REPORTING ON STATISTICS OF SIGNIFICANT SEIZURES TO THE UNITED NATIONS DIVISION OF NARCOTIC DRUGS: REVIEW OF RECENT REGIONAL TRENDS

30. At its 1st meeting, on 25 April 1991, the Sub-Commission considered agenda item 6, focusing on current trends in the illicit drug traffic in the region of the Sub-Commission. It had before it a background paper prepared by the Secretariat on the subject (DND/SC.27/1991/CRP.5), tables on seizures of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances in the region (DND/SC.27/1991/CRP.6), and reports on the illicit traffic situation in Afghanistan (DND/27.SC/1991/CRP.2), Iran (Islamic Republic of) (DND/27.SC/1991/CRP.7), India (DND/SC.27/1991/CRP.3), Turkey (DND/SC.27/1991/CRP.8) and Saudi Arabia (DND/SC.27/1991/CRP.4), together with a report on the illicit drug traffic situation in the region as a whole in 1990, presented by the observer for ICPO/Interpol (DND/27.SC/1991/CRP.9).

31. In introducing agenda item 6, the Chief of the Suppression of Illicit Traffic Section of the Division, described some of the significant trends in illicit traffic based on the annual reports and reports of significant seizures submitted by Governments to UNDCP. He urged participants to make a special effort to ensure that their Governments communicated promptly to UNDCP their annual reports, as well as significant cases involving illicit traffic. Such information was essential to the development of a complete understanding of the trends at the regional level and to the adoption of effective countermeasures at the regional level.

32. All those who spoke on agenda item 6 expressed great concern at the escalation of drug abuse and illicit traffic in the region and reiterated the importance of effective concerted regional action to deal with the problem. Several participants gave oral reports on record seizures, particularly seizures of opiates and cannabis, and on the arrest and prosecution of a large number of persons, often of different nationalities, for drug-related offences. Some speakers presented their countries as transit States, owing to their geographical position in relation to producer and consumer States, and pointed to the emerging trend of abuse resulting from the transit traffic.

33. There was general agreement that the region of the Sub-Commission continued to be faced with problems related to drug abuse and illicit traffic in psychotropic substances. The region remained a major source of opiates and cannabis, in addition to being a major consumption area for those products. There was a significant and growing illicit market in the region for psychotropic substances, particularly fenetylline.

34. Traffic in opium was reported to have increased significantly, resulting from an increase in illicit production that was estimated by the observer for ICPO/Interpol to be between 1,000 and 1,500 tonnes in 1990. Large seizures

were reported by the representatives of Afghanistan (246 tonnes), India (2 tonnes), Iran (Islamic Republic of) (20 tonnes), and Pakistan (7 tonnes).* It was pointed out that there was a tendency to convert opium into morphine and heroin in the producing areas; the transborder movement of opium continued to take place mostly from Afghanistan and Pakistan to the Islamic Republic of Iran.

35. Traffic in morphine continued, particularly from the border area between Afghanistan and Pakistan to the Islamic Republic of Iran and Turkey. It was pointed out that two major seizures by Iranian authorities at Urmiya, near the Turkish border, in April 1990 and January 1991, had, for example, accounted for 1.5 tonnes and 2.3 tonnes of morphine, respectively. Turkish law enforcement authorities had seized 432 kg in 1990.

36. Major seizures of heroin were reported in Afghanistan (1,255 tonnes), India (2.2 tonnes), Iran (Islamic Republic of) (1.8 tonnes), Pakistan (6 tonnes) and Turkey (over 1 tonne).* In addition to being huge in volume, traffic in heroin was violent in nature and worth billions of United States dollars. The observer for ICPO/Interpol stated that, like opium and morphine, heroin was mainly produced along the border between Afghanistan and Pakistan; most of it was consumed within the region, particularly in Pakistan, which accounted for 51 tonnes of pure heroin annually, India and Iran (Islamic Republic of). The illicit demand for heroin in the Gulf States was claimed to be developing gradually and consistently. The observer for ICPO/Interpol also stated that Lebanon was emerging as a significant source of heroin, about 5 tonnes being illicitly trafficked annually, some of which was locally produced. Illicit traffic in heroin was mainly undertaken by Lebanese nationals, their principal theatres of operation being France, Germany, Spain and Turkey.

37. The Sub-Commission was informed that, in spite of effective law enforcement action that had led to record seizures in the region, traffickers had succeeded in transporting increasing quantities of heroin from the Near and Middle East to Western Europe, mainly through the Islamic Republic of Iran and Turkey and along the Balkan route. Major seizures of heroin from the Near and Middle East had been made in Western Europe, which, according to the observer for ICPO/Interpol, received 5 tonnes of heroin, about 90 per cent of the heroin found on its illicit market, from the region of the Sub-Commission, some 80 per cent of which was transported along the Balkan route. To cope with the escalation in such traffic, European countries particularly affected by it were setting up a common database on illicit traffic in heroin along the Balkan route.

38. Mention was made of the use of Africans as couriers in the illicit traffic in heroin to Europe via Africa; an increasing involvement of Sri Lankan nationals as couriers was also noted.

39. The observer for ICPO/Interpol stated that, while increasing seizures of opiates originating from the Near and Middle East were being made in countries of that region and in Western Europe, there had been no pinpointing of where in that region the production of opium or its conversion into heroin was taking place. He said that the Sub-Commission could play a more active role in identifying the source of illicit production and in proposing effective countermeasures against illicit traffic from the region, in particular against illicit cultivation.

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*The Secretariat was requested to verify the accuracy at these figures.

40. The representative of Pakistan drew the attention of the Sub-Commission to the distressing situation in his country with regard to heroin traffic and abuse. As a direct result of using Pakistan for the transshipment of heroin, the drug-dependent population had been introduced to the drug and were abusing it on a larger scale. Heroin was being trafficked in large volumes across the border areas of Afghanistan and the tribal areas of Pakistan, and its abuse had affected every segment of society. It was estimated that there were over 1.1 million heroin abusers in Pakistan. The representative of Pakistan informed the Sub-Commission of measures adopted by his Government to counter the heroin epidemic. Those measures included the eradication of the illicit cultivation of the opium poppy, comprehensive training programmes for drug law enforcement personnel, enhanced law enforcement action, the establishment of a mechanism to coordinate the activities of agencies involved in the fight against drug abuse and illicit traffic, the exchange of liaison officers, and the signing of bilateral agreements with neighbouring countries, such as a recent memorandum of understanding with the Islamic Republic of Iran. He emphasized that his country had limited resources with which to fight the drug menace. He asked the international community and United Nations entities to come forward and provide Pakistan with badly needed assistance in that area.

41. The representative of Turkey reported that the abuse of illicit drugs in his country was minimal and that, by adopting comprehensive countermeasures, his Government had successfully prevented narcotic substances from spilling over onto the illicit market. He informed the Sub-Commission of a recent study initiated in his country, in collaboration with the United Nations Fund for Drug Abuse Control, to ascertain the underlying sociological causes of drug abuse with a view to finding modalities for tackling the problem. He made reference to the role and efforts of the law enforcement authorities in his country in countering illicit traffic on the Balkan route, where seizures had increased by 41 per cent in 1990.

42. The representative of India informed the Sub-Commission that, while the number of seizures of opium, heroin and cannabis in his country had increased in 1990, the quantity seized had decreased significantly, mainly as a result of strict and intensified law enforcement measures that had been adopted by his Government. He referred to the stringent legislative measures adopted in his country, which included not granting bail for serious drug trafficking offences, the confiscation of assets derived from illicit traffic, preventive detention and the adoption of severe sanctions, such as the death penalty for recidivistic traffickers. In spite of those measures, however, cannabis resin and heroin were being transported through India to Western Europe and some spillover effects were aggravating the problem of drug dependence in India.

43. The representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran, referring to the increase in opiate seizures in the region, particularly in the eastern desert and border areas of his country, emphasized the urgent need to deal with the problem of illicit cultivation of the opium poppy in the region of the Sub-Commission. He informed the Sub-Commission of the stringent measures adopted by his Government to deal with the deteriorating situation, for example, the use of severe penal sanctions, including the death penalty, as an effective deterrent and the undertaking of military operations against traffickers in the desert and mountainous regions along his country's borders with Afghanistan and Pakistan. He referred to a plan to deter illicit traffic on the eastern border of the Islamic Republic of Iran by adopting special measures in an area 110 kilometres long, which had been proclaimed a "prohibited zone", along his country's border with Afghanistan. He stated that seizures had shown that 60 per cent of the narcotic drugs entering the Islamic Republic of Iran were from Afghanistan and that 40 per cent were from Pakistan.

44. Some speakers reported on the dismantling of clandestine laboratories used mainly for the illicit manufacutre of morphine and heroin in their countries. Turkish authorities had dismantled four primitive clandestine laboratories in 1989 and one in 1990 in which heroin had been manufactured using precursors smuggled from that country's south-eastern border. The Meeting was informed of the dismantling of 12 clandestine laboratories for producing heroin in Afghanistan; raw opium, heroin and precursors used for its illicit manufacture, particularly acetic anhydride, had also been seized. Mention was made of the seizure of 22 tonnes of acetic anhydride in January 1991 on the highway between Ankara and Istanbul. The representative of Pakistan reported that his Government had placed acetic anhydride under control and had developed a mechanism to monitor its production and movement. He said that the illicit production of heroin had dropped significantly, as reflected by a significant increase in prices on the illicit market, because it had become more difficult to obtain the precursors necessary for its manufacture.

45. Cannabis in various forms continued to be produced, abused and trafficked on a large scale in several countries of the region. The observer for ICPO/Interpol stated that large seizures were reported by India (45 tonnes), Pakistan (187 tonnes) and Turkey (12 tonnes) in 1990 and by Lebanon (150 tonnes) in the first quarter of 1991. He said that the Gulf States, particularly Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates, were vulnerable to traffic mainly from Afghanistan and Pakistan, whereas Egypt, Israel, Jordan and the Syrian Arab Republic were vulnerable to illicit traffic in cannabis from Lebanon.

46. The observer for ICPO/Interpol stated that there was evidence of a regular flow of cocaine from South America to the Near and Middle East and that significant consignments of cocaine from Brazil destined for the region had been seized. Bahrain, Bangladesh, Egypt, India, Israel, Lebanon, Saudi Arabia and Turkey had reported seizures of cocaine in 1990. Citizens of South American countries who were of Lebanese origin were playing a major role in such traffic. The seizure by Syrian forces in Lebanon of significant quantities of cocaine and precursors for processing coca paste in 1991 was evidence of the existence in that country of clandestine laboratories for processing cocaine.

47. Several speakers reported considerable abuse of and traffic in psychotropic substances, particularly fenetylline, which was often found on the illicit market under the brand name Captagon. Large seizures of Captagon tablets were reported in Kuwait (32,000 tablets) and Saudi Arabia (2,600,000 tablets). Major seizures of barbiturates were reported by Saudi Arabia (300,000 tablets). Illicit trafficking in methaqualone, manufactured clandestinely in India, through certain east African countries to South Africa had increased significantly, as evidenced by record seizures in Kenya, Zambia and Zimbabwe. In India, where the manufacture of methaqualone had been banned in 1984, 2 tonnes of methaqualone was seized in 1990.

48. Several speakers described new trends in the illicit traffic and highlighted the operational successes of their national drug law enforcement agencies. Several mentioned the arrest of an increasing number of persons of different nationalities for their involvement in the illicit traffic. The representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran reported on successful operations against heavily armed traffickers along the eastern desert border of his country, which resulted in large seizures, the arrest of major traffickers and the dismantling of drug trafficking syndicates.

49. Some speakers emphasized the importance their Governments attached to programmes for reducing illicit drug demand that involved preventive education, the treatment and rehabilitation of drug-dependent persons and the promotion of community activities to prevent drug abuse. Such measures were considered a necessary complement to programmes for reducing supply by drug law enforcement.

50. All speakers emphasized the paramount importance of regional cooperation and coordination in combating illicit drug trafficking. Concerted action involving the cooperation of Governments in the region was essential to countering the escalating trends in drug abuse and illicit traffic. The rapid exchange of information between law enforcement agencies in the region, as well as with those in consumer States, was considered a prerequisite for such cooperation. Several speakers referred to bilateral and regional agreements or other forms of cooperation and reported on the positive results achieved through such channels.

VI. IDENTIFICATION OF ILLICIT CULTIVATION OF NARCOTIC PLANTS BY REMOTE SENSING

51. At its 2nd meeting, on 25 April 1991, the Sub-Commission considered agenda item 7, identification of illicit cultivation of narcotic plants by remote sensing. It had before it the report of the Sub-Commission at its twenty-sixth session (E/CN.7/1990/12) and the report of the meeting of the expert group on the detection of illicit cultivation of narcotic plants by remote sensing (E/CN.7/1990/CRP.15), held at Vienna from 23 to 27 October 1989.

52. In introducing agenda item 7, the Deputy Director of the Division said that an expert group on the identification of illicit cultivation of narcotic plants by remote sensing had met in Vienna in October 1990. He stated that the Commission, in its resolution 8 (S-XI), had invited all States members of the Sub-Commission to support and provide the necessary facilities for the survey of areas of illicit poppy cultivation, with the financial support of the United Nations Fund for Drug Abuse Control. In that same resolution, the Commission had requested the Division to take the necessary measures to develop a methodology for identifying areas of illicit poppy cultivation in the region. He indicated that progress made in satellite technology and the methodology developed by the expert group meeting and its follow-up had reached a stage where the implementation of a programme for the identification of illicit cultivation of narcotic plants could be initiated. The critical factor at that stage was the availability of test sites in countries of the region that were affected by such illicit cultivation.

53. Some speakers expressed their Governments interest in and support for the project, pointing out that the use of satellite imagery had proven to be reliable whereas land and aerial surveys were difficult and sometimes dangerous to conduct. The representative of India informed the Sub-Commission that the Indian Department of Space had concluded that a project to identify the illicit cultivation of the opium poppy and cannabis in India could be undertaken on a cost-effective basis and for a portion of the cost of other currently available satellite imagery.

54. The representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran proposed that, in order to properly deal with the urgent matter of illicit poppy cultivation, it should be included as a regular item on the agenda of forthcoming sessions of the Sub-Commission. The proposal was unanimously approved by the Meeting.

55. The representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran, referring to the concern he had expressed to the Sub-Commission at its twenty-fifth and twenty-sixth sessions with regard to the urgent need to identify illicit poppy cultivation in the region, stated that, if there was general agreement among the States members of the Sub-Commission, his Government was prepared to cooperate with the Division in connection with the detection of illicit cultivation of narcotic plants by remote sensing.

VII. OTHER BUSINESS

56. At its 4th meeting, on 26 April 1991, the Sub-Commission considered agenda item 8, entitled "Other business".

57. The representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran made a statement proposing that his country's Government act as host to the Sub-Commission at its twenty-eighth session at Teheran in 1991. The Sub-Commission endorsed the offer. The Chairman, on behalf of the Sub-Commission, thanked the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran for its generous offer.

VIII. DRAFT RESOLUTIONS BEFORE THE SUB-COMMISSION

58. At its 4th meeting, on 26 April 1991, the Sub-Commission approved two draft resolutions for adoption by the Economic and Social Council through the Commission on Narcotic Drugs.

59. The draft resolution entitled "Establishment of regional drug law enforcement countermeasures in the Near and Middle East in the context of socio-economic and cultural development" (DND/27.SC/1991/L.2) was sponsored by Afghanistan, Egypt, India, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Jordan, Lebanon, Oman, Pakistan, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Turkey, United Arab Emirates and Yemen. The draft resolution entitled "Convening of a meeting at ministerial level in the Near and Middle East to enhance the effectiveness of interregional cooperation in resolving matters related to illicit trafficking and drug abuse" (DND/27.SC/1991/L.3) was sponsored by India, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Jordan, Pakistan and Turkey. For the text, see chapter I, section A, draft resolutions I and II.

60. At that same meeting the Sub-Commission also approved a draft resolution for adoption by the Commission on Narcotic Drugs, entitled "Assistance to narcotic-producing States for the eradication of narcotic plants by crop substitution" (DND/27.SC/1991/L.4), sponsored by India, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Pakistan and Saudi Arabia. For the text, see chapter I, section B.

IX. ADOPTION OF THE REPORT

61. At its 4th meeting, on 26 April, the Sub-Commission adopted the report on its twenty-sixth session.

X. ORGANIZATION OF THE SESSION

A. Opening and duration of the session

62. The Sub-Commission on Illicit Drug Traffic and Related Matters in the Near and Middle East held its twenty-seventh session at Vienna from 25 to 26 April 1991. The Director of the Division of Narcotic Drugs, United Nations

International Drug Control Programme (UNDCP), opened the Meeting on behalf of the Secretary-General and the Executive Director of the United Nations International Drug Control Programme.

63. In his welcoming statement, the outgoing Chairman of the Sub-Commission stressed the urgency for enhanced regional coordination between the States in the region in fighting the scourge of illicit traffic and drug abuse.

64. The Director of the Division pointed to the role of the Sub-Commission, the membership of which had expanded to include all the States in the Near and Middle East, in the coordination of national activities in countering the threat of illicit traffic and drug abuse. He stated that the review by the Commission at its thirty-fourth session of its role and functioning would give the Sub-Commission an opportunity to present to the Commission its views on the future role of the subsidiary bodies of the Commission.

65. The newly elected Chairman of the Sub-Commission stated that the turmoil that had affected the region since the twenty-sixth session of the Sub-Commission had prevented the Sub-Commission from holding a session in one of the capitals in the region. Referring to the increased seizures of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances in the region, he emphasized that in order to have a complete understanding of the trends in the illicit traffic and to adopt appropriate countermeasures, it was important for members of the Sub-Commission to communicate such seizures to UNDCP.

66. The Executive Director of UNDCP, addressing the Sub-Commission at its 2nd meeting, referred to the restructuring involved in integrating the activities of the Division of Narcotic Drugs, the secretariat of INCB and the United Nations Fund for Drug Abuse Control into a single programme. He stated that the General Assembly, in its resolution 45/179, had called for the coordination of all drug control matters within the United Nations system. He stressed the need to establish priorities within UNDCP and the unique opportunity provided to the Commission, at its thirty-fourth session, to establish itself as the main policy-making body for drug control matters within the United Nations.

B. Attendance

67. The following States members of the Sub-Commission were represented: Afghanistan, Egypt, India, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Oman, Pakistan, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Turkey, United Arab Emirates and Yemen.

68. The following States sent observers: Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Senegal and Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

69. The following intergovernmental organizations were also represented by observers: Colombo Plan Bureau, Council of Arab Ministers of the Interior and the International Criminal Police Organization.

70. Palestine was represented by an observer.

71. The International Road Transport Union, a non-governmental organization in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council (category II), was also represented.

C. Election of officers

72. At its 1st meeting, on 25th April 1991, the Sub-Commission elected the following officers by acclamation:

Chairman: Ayhan Kamel (Turkey)

Vice-Chairman: Aboulfazi Doust Mohammadian (Islamic Republic of Iran)

Vice-Chairman: Nazir Ahmad Malik (Pakistan)

Rapporteur: D.R. Pradham (India)

D. Agenda

73. At its 1st meeting, on 25 April, the Sub-Commission adopted the following agenda:

1. Election of officers.
2. Adoption of the agenda and organization of work.
3. Consideration of urgent matters or specific issues affecting the region.
4. Progress report on steps taken to ratify, accede to or provisionally apply the United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances.
5. Drug law enforcement training in the region of the Sub-Commission.
6. Reporting on statistics of significant seizures to the Division of Narcotic Drugs: review of recent regional trends.
7. Identification of illicit cultivation of narcotic plants by remote sensing.
8. Other business.
9. Recommendations.
10. Adoption of the report.

E. Documentation

74. The documents before the Sub-Commission at its twenty-seventh session are listed in the annex.

Note

1/ Report of the International Conference on Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking, Vienna, 17-26 June 1987 (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.87.I.18), chap. I, sect. A.

Annex

List of documents

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*Issued for participants only.